

line; nor is it any disrespect to anybody to add that, in this peculiar crisis, a man of large experience and uncommon qualifications is needed for that most important office. After Secession is settled, we will vote for Major Dickinson as Minister to all Central America put together; but just now, we must say that Mr. Squier would probably be a more useful representative of the United States in that region than the Major.

## SIGNS AND PORTENTS.

The Charleston Mercury renews the consideration of the Jeff. Davis Constitution, and is much concerned lest that provision which allows the admission of Northern States into the Southern Confederacy, may work a great mischief, and make a new deal necessary. It now perceives with alarm that "there is nothing to prevent the admission of Northern States into the new Confederation." Now we do not think there is any immediate danger that any one of the Free States will voluntarily knock at the door of Jeff. Davis, and apply to be let in; yet, after all, there may be some ground for The Mercury's suspicion. Leaving the door open had a meaning, and was not altogether accidental. Only a few days ago the same journal gave expression to its foreboding that after all the independence and supremacy of the Slave Confederacy, which has been the dream of his life, was to be defeated. "There are specks," it exclaimed, "upon the Southern horizon that ere long may become dark and muttering clouds. We fear reconstruction on the basis of the new Constitution." The correspondent of THE TRIBUNE, at Montgomery, who is deep in the secrets of Jeff. Davis, probably had a clearer vision of these clouds, when, a few days since, he telegraphed us in the following language:

"The Government of the Confederate States has sent to the Democratic Convention of all the Free States of New England. The authority of the old bulk of the Union will be disregarded. The Southern States will probably be represented by a delegation to meet with Peter Cass and Dean Richmond. You may expect soon to see some original and startling diplomatic movements."

Mr. Breckinridge, when making his speech in the United States Senate last week, had the same thing in his eye, but instead of a cloud, he appears to have regarded it as a bow of promise. The late Vice-President permits a glimpse when he cautiously draws the curtain aside:

"The Border Slave States cannot renounce this Confederacy. The majority of the non-slaveholding States have the power to do so, and to express the opinion with a firm conviction that unless within a short time the Republicans who are here manifest a spirit to give the equality which the Border Slave States claim, the question will be solved in one of these ways: We may drift into civil strife if the people are allowed no opportunity to speak; but if we have not civil strife, then a peaceful separation by treaty. If the Republican statesmen and their friends remain firm, rigid, and determined, there can be no other result than to drive the Border Slave States into a union with the Confederate States, in the belief that that Government represents the true principles of the old Federal system. If the Border Slave States hold a Convention, which seems probable, and the people of the non-slaveholding States deem it their duty to reject such propositions as may be essential, then the disruption of the Union will be inevitable to the extent of fifteen States, and at no distant day the new Confederacy will be the largest on this continent."

This is as definite as we could expect, at present, from Mr. Breckinridge; but The Pennsylvania, discussing his speech, puts the idea in the following emphatic language:

"The times, then, unavoidably arise, do the people of the Southern States prefer a Republican administration with principles and a policy which perpetrate and, of necessity, exclude the whole of the Slaveholding States, or will they regulate their conduct and secure a harmonious confederacy of thirty-four States? This is the root, the very pivot of all discussion."

The N. O. Picayune says the future is free from all doubt, and that there will be permanent separation on such terms as may be demanded by the Seceded States or "honorable reconstruction." The same idea crops out in various localities in the dominions of Mr. Jeff. Davis. We find it also nearer home. At a Democratic meeting lately held in the town of New-Rochelle, Westchester County, in our own State, the proceedings of which were published in The Journal of Commerce, probably on account of its nearness in sympathy with the sentiments expressed, the following resolution was adopted:

"Resolved, That the Democracy of New-Rochelle adopt as their party platform the Constitution of the seven Southern Confederate States."

As there is a reason for the milk in the foreign ocean, so there is one for it in the domestic article. New-Rochelle has the honor of being the residence of Richard Lathers, esq., formerly of the City of Charleston, S. C., the same gentleman who originated and engineered the famous Pine-street meeting, gotten up mainly to glorify himself. It is also the residence of several Federal Custom-House employees, whose bread and butter being seriously threatened by a recent appointment by President Lincoln, are ready to bid for pay and rations from the crib of the Southern President.

The Albany Atlas and Argus also appears to have scented the reconstruction idea on the basis of the Jeff. Davis Constitution, for it has lately been praising that instrument as "admirable." We may expect soon to see Jeff. Davis's Commissioners among us, and the Democratic press throughout the North with full accord supporting the plan. On our part, we are ready for the day which is to witness the opening of such a contest, and we trust that the machinists and scene-shifters, whose office it is, will not long postpone the lifting of the curtain.

We do not often deem it necessary to take the trouble to reply to the abuse and misrepresentation of THE TRIBUNE with which The N. Y. Express from day to day regales its readers, but when The Express replies to and refutes itself, as it did yesterday, we can hardly let the opportunity pass to show the concern in its true colors. The following extracts refer to our Washington dispatch stating that orders had been sent for the reinforcement of Fort Pickens:

From The N. Y. Express, March 29.

OUR MIND RECOGNIZES THE SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE N. Y. TRIBUNE, dated March 29, as a misrepresentation of the facts, and a deliberate attempt to mislead the public. The dispatch in question, published in the Tribune of March 29, states that orders had been sent for the reinforcement of Fort Pickens. This is a complete misstatement of the facts. The only dispatch from Washington, dated March 29, which we have seen, is one which states that the Government is considering the question of reinforcing Fort Pickens. It does not state that orders have been sent for the reinforcement of Fort Pickens. The Tribune's statement is a deliberate attempt to mislead the public, and we regret to find that it has been so widely circulated.

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## THE LATEST NEWS.

RECEIVED BY

## MAGNETIC TELEGRAPH.

From Washington.

Special Dispatch to The N. Y. Tribune.

WASHINGTON, Friday, March 29, 1861.

PORT SUMTER.

The Fort Sumter question is still undetermined, and will probably remain so for several days. A protracted meeting of the Cabinet was held this morning on that subject, but adjourned without reaching a final conclusion. All the material facts have already been given to the public, and after the recent reports made by the two special agents who went to Charleston, no additional information is expected or desired. The whole case is now fully before the President, and includes the opinions of his Cabinet, of Gen. Scott and the engineer officers, and the special personal reports referred to. He expects to take the entire responsibility of whatever decision may be reached, and will, doubtless, be sustained by the country. Mr. Lincoln has taken every precaution to satisfy his own mind of his duty first, and will act under that conviction, regardless of consequences.

Neither Capt. Fox nor Col. Lamont was permitted, while at Charleston, to examine the military works and fortifications made by the Southern authorities. They both visited Fort Sumter, under escort, and did not go beyond it. The chief object of their mission was to confer, personally, with Major Anderson concerning some points about which the President desired fuller and more explicit information than has previously been obtained.

The extent and nature of the works have been the subject of constant correspondence with the War Department by Major Anderson, so that the Administration is well informed on that score.

General Cameron went to Harrisburg this evening, and will return by Tuesday. It is not supposed that any action will be taken concerning Fort Sumter in the mean time. His views of policy regarding it are perfectly understood. He considers the withdrawal a military necessity, with the inadequate means now at the disposal of the President, and the absence of all discretionary power.

Notwithstanding the unauthorized contradiction in regard to the landing of the 400 soldiers on board the Brooklyn at Fort Pickens, the fact is nevertheless true, and the order left here by a Messenger two weeks ago. He is daily expected back, and it is quite probable the public may learn at any hour of the result of his presence there. It depends entirely upon the character of the secret orders which Jefferson Davis recently sent to General Bragg, whether these troops are landed peaceably or not. The Government has done nothing to provoke a collision, and if it should unfortunately occur, the Southern Confederacy will be alone responsible for the consequences that may ensue.

THE CONTROLLERSHIP.

The intended restoration of Elisha Whittelsey to the First Controllorship, indicates a determination on the part of Mr. Chase to arrest the culpable and extravagant misdoings of the last two Administrations. His other appointments to responsible posts about the Treasury conform to the same principle. Rigid and inflexible rules of accountability will be applied in all the Departments.

THE PATENT OFFICE.

Mr. Hallows entered upon his duties as Commissioner of Patents to-day, and will doubtless make a faithful officer. The Appeal Board of Examiners, established by the recent law, will relieve, to some extent, the pressure upon his position, and secure the professional assistance which has been heretofore much needed. As just organized, the Board is composed of well qualified and experienced men. The patent business, after having been depressed for several months, is again active, and over one hundred and fifty are issued weekly.

THE CROWD OF SOJOURNERS.

The crowd has thin, and out considerably since the adjournment of the Senate, and the Administration will now have an opportunity, for the first time since taking possession of the Executive office, to turn serious attention to the grave questions by which it is surrounded. Thus far, it has been embarrassed at every stage of progress.

THE LARGE CITY APPOINTMENTS.

The New-York, Philadelphia, and other principal appointments, will be taken up when the immediate pressure of public affairs is over. It is the intention of the President and Cabinet to dispose of the patronage promptly and decisively, wherever they can give it the necessary consideration.

THE FOREIGN MISSIONS.

All the new Ministers are expected to start for their posts immediately. The law allows thirty days, usually, for preparation, but the conditions of affairs in the country requires their presence immediately, especially at the leading missions, to counteract the efforts that will be made for recognition by the Southern Confederacy.

Notwithstanding the reports from abroad, there is authority for stating that none of the great powers will recognize the Montgomery Government, until the United States have first admitted or accepted it as an accomplished fact. The position of the Administration in that respect will be soon defined, since the instructions to the new Ministers must cover this ground completely. The President has no power, under the Constitution, to acknowledge secession, and, therefore, he cannot receive the Commissioners sent here by Mr. Davis in any official capacity, to treat concerning the public property. This position was clearly and emphatically stated in the inaugural, and the President has no way departed from it. But the Federal laws are entirely ignored in the seceded States, and a conflict of authority is about to occur in regard to the tariff and other questions, which will soon morally determine their exact status, one way or the other. Our Government or their Government must prevail. Both cannot exercise functions at the same time.

To the Associated Press.

WASHINGTON, Friday, March 29, 1861.

During the late executive session of the Senate, about 400 nominations were confirmed, nearly 50 of which were sent in by the President yesterday. The Post-Office Department, under the provisions of the recently enacted law, has restored the mail service between Georgetown and Lexington, Missouri. The service is six times a week.

Gen. Wm. Hickey was elected Assistant-Secretary of the Senate, and not Secretary, as erroneously stated in the newspapers. Asbury Dickins retains the latter position.

The trial of Capt. Armstrong, for the surrender of the Pensacola Navy-Yard, is still progressing.

The Government has sent to Florida for witnesses. Much anxiety is expressed respecting the distribution of the building of the seven steam ships-of-war ordered by the last Congress. No official action has been taken on the subject; besides, the appropriation for that purpose will not be available until after the 1st of July.

The Cabinet met at an early hour this morning. The Administration is not particularly popular among the press for news revealed by the Secretary of the Interior, the threatening events in the South to-day occupy their attention.

Recently the arrival of ordnance in Richmond from the Bellona Foundry created intense excitement. Many of the citizens being apprehensive that they would be sent to Fort Monroe, and that the movement would be considered by the Government as a sign of Southern hostility. The truth is, as ascertained at the Ordnance Bureau, that the cannon were contracted for three years ago, and that the contractor merely delivered them at the place agreed upon in order to receive his pay.

The receipts into the Treasury the last week were nearly \$1,000,000. The net balance on hand is \$1,589,000.

The appointment of James E. Harvey as Minister to Portugal, is regarded as the more complimentary, because it was gracefully conferred without his solicitation, and unanimously confirmed by the Senate. It is universally and especially to the Press, with which he has long been connected.

Lieut. Horace H. Harrison of the U. S. Navy, died here to-day.

Secretary Cameron left here for Pennsylvania this afternoon, to return on Wednesday next.

G. W. Lane, recently confirmed as Judge for the Northern and Southern Districts of Alabama, will, it is said, endeavor to hold his Court at Athens, in the Union part of that State.

NEW-YORK LEGISLATURE.

SENATE, ALBANY, March 29, 1861.

The following bills were ordered to a third reading:

To incorporate the Metropolitan Club Company.

To enable the Supervisors of New-York to try and purchase a Court-House site.

To amend the act in relation to the claims of soldiers of 1812.

To provide for the incorporation of skating ponds and sporting grounds.

To amend the act in relation to Central Park.

To amend the act in relation to the Sister Islands of the St. Lawrence River to the United States.

To increase the number of Commissioners of Deeds in New-York.

To amend the act in relation to the Sing Sing Prison with Croton water.

The New-York Post-Office Site bill, as passed by the Assembly.

To amend the act for the preservation of game.

ASSEMBLY.

A number of resolutions were presented against any railroad in Remondy.

RESOLUTIONS REPORTED FAVORABLY.

To amend the Charter of the Long Island Railroad. In relation to commercial paper falling due on certain holidays.

To incorporate a Company for the safe keeping and delivery of valuable packages and property by means of fire and burglar-proof safes.

To incorporate the National Horse-Show Association.

To abolish the use of the "Shower-Bath" in the State Prison.

To reorganize and regulate the Common Schools of Brooklyn.

To incorporate the American Church Missionary Society.

Mr. BINGHAM called up the concurrent resolutions of the Senate for inquiry into the management of the L. & N. Railroad, and they were adopted.

The bill to amend the Life Insurance law, so as to give power to issue against accidents, &c., was passed.

THE HOUSE TOOK UP THE UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF GENERAL ORDERS.

The bill to enable the schools of the Children's Aid Society to participate in Common School money was taken up, and occupied the greater part of the evening session.

Messrs. W. WALSH, SHAW, COZANS, CALLAHAN and WOODLUFF opposed the bill, and after a long debate it was ordered to a third reading.

Mr. RICE took the lead in advocacy of the bill in the House.

Mr. SHAW moved to disagree with the report of the Committee on the bill to amend the Life Insurance law, which, after another discussion, was ordered to a third reading.

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BILLS REPORTED.

Among the bills reported to the Assembly to-day and forwarded to the Committee of the Whole, were the

Commonwealth Railroad, the Long Island Railroad, and the

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